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ABSTRACT

A study investigated the utility of computer-assisted English second language instruction for limited-English-proficient (LEP) secondary school students in a system in which there was no regular bilingual or compensatory education offered. As a result of a home language survey and followup oral language proficiency test, three LEP or non-English-speaking students were identified. All needed a medium for communication and self-expression. These students were provided with instruction in the use of a word processing program and encouraged to use the computer independently. It was found that after the 12-week program, students acquired word processing skills and learned to use the computer for daily written assignments for regular classes. Recommendations for followup include incorporating word processing into the regular classrooms, perhaps drawing on the LEP students' newly-acquired knowledge, establishing a better procedure for identifying and addressing the needs of LEP students, and providing inservice training for regular classroom teachers in dealing with LEP student needs. A 22-item bibliography is included, and appended materials include the home language survey, a language skills checklist for teachers, and a student survey of computer skills. (MSE)

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ED 364 101

ASSISTING SECONDARY LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT STUDENTS THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPUTER-ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING

by

Sherry M. Jacoby

A practicum report submitted to the Faculty of the Center for the Advancement of Education of Nova University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science.

May 25, 1993

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Abstract

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The state of Florida has made the commitment to improve the education of Limited English Proficient (LEP) students; in its schools. By mandating the provision of services and essential programming for LEP students enrolled in all Florida public schools, the state has set standards which the 67 counties in the state are expected to uphold and follow.

The target school cited in this practicum is a school that, at the time of project implementation, did not have an established means of providing for identified LEP students.

It was determined that the implementation of computer-assisted language learning strategies would provide LEP students with a means of communicating in English in a non-threatening manner. The technological-computer as assistant would be in place for them as they worked to enhance English language skills independently.

Students within the target group demonstrated a willingness and ability to master word processing competencies. An improved disposition toward written expression in English was noted as students began to accept the computer as a supportive and helpful tool. Appendices include a home language survey, a language skills checklist, and a student computer survey.

Authorship Statement/Document Release

Authorship Statement

I hereby testify that this paper and the work it reports are entirely my own. Where it has been necessary to draw from the work of others, published or unpublished, I have acknowledged such work in accordance with accepted scholarly and editorial practice. I give this testimony freely, out of respect for the scholarship of other workers in the field and in the hope that my work, presented here, will earn similar respect.

Sherry M. Jacoby

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Sherry M. Jacoby

May 29, 1993

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CHAPTER I

Purpose

Background

The school in which the targeted population of limited English proficient (LEP) students were enrolled is located in a county in Florida which at the time of project implementation offered no bilingual classes or programs for teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL).

Because of the demographic disparity of LEP students throughout the school district, and the low incidence of identified LEP students enrolled in district schools, the district comprehensive English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) plan had determined that highly individualized strategies for providing English for speakers of other languages would be designed and implemented within the framework of the regular classrooms in lieu of structured ESOL programs.

All teachers are required to undergo a minimum of four hours of inservice instruction which would provide them with essential background information concerning the evolvement of educational opportunities provided

for LEP students in the state of Florida and to familiarize them with some basic ESOL strategies which they might incorporate into their regular educational programs. This integration of language and content instruction for LEP students had been identified as an immersion approach in the district plan.

In the absence of a designed TESOL program or teacher to function as support system for LEP students at the targeted school, the researcher sought, and was granted, permission to establish a tutorial program with herself serving as volunteer teacher. Working sessions with identified LEP students were scheduled for two class periods per week for a period of twelve weeks. This was accomplished with the cooperation of the students' regular English teachers and the students themselves.

The researcher is a certified elementary education teacher with nineteen years of practical teaching experience. Having taught for eight years in an international school setting in Saudi Arabia, the researcher has had the opportunity to work with students whose first language was not English. As a result of that enriching experience, the desire to

pursue a master's degree in TESOL grew. Since returning to the United States, the researcher has had the opportunity to work with adult students in a conversational English program. The exposure to students at the secondary and adult level spawned a desire to develop a practicum project centered around local high school students who had been identified as LEP students.

The IDEA Oral Language Proficiency Test II (IPT II) was administered to all students whose parents or guardians responded with a yes to any one of the three questions posed on a home language survey. A copy of the survey questions will be found in the appendices (appendix A).

Six students at the project site were initially identified as possible LEP students as a result of the home language survey. Upon administration of the IPT II, three of the original six students were found to be either LEP or non-English speakers (NES). Those three students became the designated target population for the practicum project.

The student who had been identified as NES was from mainland China. He has been designated as student A. At the time of project implementation student A was

16 years of age and was in the tenth grade. At the time of initial screening, he had been enrolled in the school system for three weeks.

One of the two students identified as LEP on the IPT II was 14 years of age at the time of project implementation. He has been designated as student B. His home country was Puerto Rico. He had been enrolled as a student at the high school for six months.

The third student, who was identified as being LEP on the IPT II, was 16 years of age at the time of project implementation. He has been designated as student C. His home country was Puerto Rico. He had been enrolled in the district school system for 15 months.

Both students B and C seemed to have developed basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS), as teachers and guidance counselors verified during oral interviews. The researcher concurred after interviewing each student individually. Neither student was hesitant to communicate in English and in fact, seemed confident in their ability to speak in English.

Student A, on the other hand, had not demonstrated an ability to communicate verbally, other than being able to extend basic greetings and simple responses. He

attempted to convey thoughts through the use of single words or incomplete sentences, which proved to be frustrating for him.

Whereas students B and C were able to communicate on a social level, they had apparently not developed sufficient cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) to be successful in their studies. A review of grades received during the term of the project indicated that neither student B nor C had received passing grades in English, Reading, or Social Studies courses. Written assignments were frequently turned in late and generally were incomplete or lacking in content.

Student A received his first quarterly grades during the course of the project. Although his grades in English and History classes were failing, he received passing grades in Chemistry and Math courses. Student A had taken both Chemistry and Math courses while living in China, which might account for his success in those courses which were instructed in English at his present school. Written assignments in History and English classes proved to be too difficult for him to complete in the English language.

Rarely did any of the targeted students volunteer

information or make an effort to become part of any group discussions in class. The reticence of the three targeted students to communicate orally indicated a problem in either their willingness or their being able to effectively communicate thoughts and ideas to teachers and fellow students. This same reluctance or inability to complete written assignments was perceived by teachers to be a negative attitude on the part of the LEP students toward writing in English.

Subsequent to reviewing language arts teachers' responses to a language skills checklist, a copy of which will be found in the appendices (appendix B), holding discussions with other subject area instructors, observing each of the targeted students in regular classroom settings and personally interviewing each one of those students, the researcher was able to conclude that none of the students being targeted had the confidence, or perhaps the linguistic knowledge, to express themselves in the context of class discussions and that all three of the students were reluctant to attempt written communication in English. Yet each had indicated on a student survey that was conducted that he liked to write in his first language.

A need existed for those LEP students to convey

thoughts and ideas. Providing designated LEP students some means of enhancing their language acquisition while offering them a medium for communicating in a non-threatening manner became the primary goal of the researcher. The designated channel of communication also had to be tailored to suit the communicative competencies of each student as well as being personally valuable to each student if it were to be successful. It was to that aim that the outcome objectives were developed and implemented. They are as follows.

Outcome Objectives

1. Each student will be able to successfully exhibit basic computer competencies at the conclusion of the outlined twelve week project time subsequent to receiving basic instruction in the use of the Appleworks word processing program and each will be able to demonstrate to the researcher the correct start-up and operation procedures for the designated software program.

2. Subsequent to the twelve week implementation of the project two thirds of the targeted students will modify their perceptions that learning to use the computer would be difficult to the persuasion that basic computer literacy is attainable as indicated by their responses to a concluding oral interview conducted by the researcher.

3. Over a period of twelve weeks, all targeted students will manifest an improved disposition toward written expression in English as evidenced by their productions of creative writing pieces and subsequent permission to allow completed compositions to be published in the school newspaper.

4. Pursuant to participation in the twelve week project, 100% of the students will demonstrate

increased awareness of basic English language spelling, punctuation and writing mechanics by compiling a student-contrived checklist to be used as a guide in editing written work.

CHAPTER II

Research and Solution Strategy

The use of computers in American classrooms has increased appreciably during the past decade. Between 1981 and 1986, the percentage of American schools with computers grew from approximately 18% to almost 96% (Cohen, 1988). Technology appears to be changing the way students think about and respond to learning (Olson, 1990). The role of computers in education has expanded over the years, from drill and practice machines to technologically advanced tools which offer sound, graphics, and interactive video capabilities. The implementation of computer-assisted language learning (CALL) strategies for the education of LEP students has far-reaching ramifications, of which many aspects have been the subject of a great deal of research, study, and debate in recent years.

One of the questions posed in a study by Neu and Scarcella, as cited by Chaudron (1988), was directed to the perceptions non-native English speaking (NNES) students have as to the helpfulness of word processing

in improving writing skills in English. Results of the survey which was administered as part of the study, indicated that NNES students felt their writing benefited from using the word processor.

The previously cited study also asked the participating NNES students if they had experienced difficulty in learning word processing while still learning English. Responses indicated they had not experienced any difficulty. The majority of the subjects in that, and other studies, have had positive attitudes toward learning to use word processing. The series of studies done by Kulik and colleagues (Kulik, Bangert, & Williams, 1983; Kulik & Bangert-Downs, 1983-1984; Kulik, Kulik, & Bangert-Downs, 1985; Kulik & Kulik, 1986, 1987), all suggest that students hold positive attitudes toward using computers (Dunkel, 1991).

A recent study was conducted by Olsen and Krendl (1990), which focused its research on the effectiveness of computer applications with at-risk students. While there are many factors involved in the dropout process, students who have serious deficiencies in the basic skills are prime candidates for dropouts (Clouse, 1991). For LEP students entering the school system at

the middle or high school levels, the frustration and possible failure in their attempts at mastering basic English language skills, in addition to assimilating into a new and oftentimes strange social stratum, can indeed have the potential of inadvertently placing them in a position of becoming at-risk students if their linguistic needs are not met.

If the intellectual curiosity of LEP students is to be stimulated and nurtured by the school, then provisions must be made to allow those students to fulfill their potential through the medium of English. Savignon, as cited by Huang (1989), has stated that programs and courses should be flexible enough to permit learners to pursue and experience success in areas of language that appeal to them most. This statement reflects the philosophy of whole language teaching which has gained wide recognition and acceptance in the field of education. Among its tenets are language learned through meaningful use, the commitment to student-centered curricula, the encouragement of students as active participants in learning rather than passive recipients of information, and integrated language learning where specific skills are practiced and applied independent of isolated drill

and practice sessions.

The recent trend in content-area classrooms, as well as in ESOL classes, has been to view writing as a thinking process in which learners develop their own ideas freely and openly (Brown, 1991). Since the natural purpose of language is to communicate, it is important to keep the language intact. When language is dissected into words, syllables and isolated sounds, the meaning becomes lost. The non-threatening aspect of computer-assisted language learning (CALL) provides the student with a tool to be used in manipulating and expanding the English language. Students learn to write by actually writing. Editing is a process that can be enhanced through the use of spelling and grammar checking software programs designed to assist writers.

At The School Of The Future, a public secondary school in New York City, technology is used to help students become more powerful learners. It is their belief that the more students control how and what they learn, the more they want to learn (Soloman, 1992). A student-centered environment, where students take responsibility for their own learning, and become more active participants through collaboration and shared decision making, will help LEP students develop the

language skills they will need to be successful in school. In addition, they will become critical thinkers, equipped with problem-solving strategies that will have been developed in conjunction with English language competence (Brown, 1991).

Technology can indeed be a powerful tool in helping students meet the challenge of becoming academically successful while learning English. Learning to use the word processor need not be an added encumbrance for LEP students. Trollip and Alessi (1988) concur that for most students, learning about computers should be handled in the same way as they learn about telephones, cars and other products of the technological era. Learning about computers should be an incidental benefit of learning any subject. Students will use basic word processing skills to communicate with the teacher and with each other. Computer-based instruction has the capability of motivating the student through a secure and supportive learning environment. Trollip and Alessi concluded that many students feel more comfortable with making mistakes in the privacy of a one-on-one computer environment which is non-threatening. Students who are placed in that setting are offered learning that is interesting,

exciting and fun. Clouse (1991) concluded that students' interest in academic subjects increased and that the computer created interest and enthusiasm. The implications are that the microcomputer is an effective tool and that, by giving LEP students the option of learning to use it effectively, focus is placed on empowering the students to take an active, participatory role in learning English, with improvements in self-esteem, attitudes toward school, and improvement in academic achievement desirable secondary outcomes.

Subsequent to observing identified LEP students in their classes and interviewing the many teachers and counselors they came into contact with each day, it became clear to the researcher that a genuine need existed to provide these students with an alternate means of communicating thoughts and ideas while enhancing their English language acquisition in a non-threatening manner. In all of their classes these students were expected to have, or to somehow quickly gain, enough command of the English language to meet standard course requirements.

Individualized strategies for assisting identified LEP students in the acquisition of English language

skills within the confines of the regular classroom had not as yet been developed at the secondary school in which the project took place. The in-service training provided by the district, which the researcher attended, had not addressed specific educational strategies to aid teachers in their attempts to instruct. Teachers seemed to be experiencing a sense of frustration in not knowing how to better provide for the individual learning needs of the LEP students enrolled in their courses of study.

It was determined by the researcher that computer assisted language learning (CALL) might offer the targeted students a learning environment that would be interesting, informative, and individualized to meet some of their linguistic needs. For students not yet proficient in the written aspect of the English language, the word processor could serve as technical assistant, as well as editor, for student-driven text. Student responses to a survey regarding attitudes toward computers and learning to use the word processor were encouraging. A copy of the student survey will be found in the appendices (appendix C). They were asked to respond to questions pertaining to their perceived ability to learn word processing skills while still

learning English. Two of the three students involved in the project felt that learning to use the computer would be difficult. All three students, however, indicated they would like to learn how to use the computer and felt it would help them improve their English.

It was determined by the researcher that by offering the targeted students individualized instruction in the Appleworks word processing program, the perception of two of the three students that, learning to use the computer would be difficult, would then be dispelled. Students were encouraged to become self-directed in first, learning to utilize the available hardware and software, and secondly in being able to integrate the newly learned skill into practical usage when completing written assignments in English and other academic courses.

The purpose of the project was not to enhance or even supplement the regular English courses in which LEP students were enrolled. With the introduction of word processing, an attempt was made to facilitate learning for the students. Research has shown that computer applications have the capacity to change the learning environment for LEP students. In a school

setting where no formal ESOL classes had been established and teachers had not as yet received sufficient training in the use of ESOL strategies, it was felt that the computer might prove to be an interim, cost-effective co-worker. That is not to say that the role of the classroom teacher should in any way be diminished. Rather, it was the intent of the project coordinator to use the LEP students as models for demonstrating to teachers the relative ease of learning to use the word processor. The mutual dividends for students and those teachers who were willing to implement computer assisted language learning strategies were designed to be shown through the evolution of student-driven text during the course of the twelve week project implementation.

Once student anxieties were overcome and students gained confidence in using the computer for writing purposes, they could then begin to develop an independent use of the technology, with themselves in control. A desired outcome was to have each student voluntarily submit a computer-generated composition for publication in the school newspaper. If they were willing to do this, it would be an indication that the integration of the computer as a facilitating tool in

exploring written use of the language had been successful and that student writing would be encouraged, not squelched, by the use of technology.

CHAPTER III

Method

The first five weeks of the designated twelve week project was devoted to establishing an LEP plan for the secondary school in which the practicum took place. This was accomplished with the cooperation of the administrative and guidance staff at the targeted school. As there was no LEP committee in place at the time of project implementation, the researcher offered to meet with those individuals who would ultimately assume the responsibilities for designing and implementing a school-based plan. This was done with the cooperation of the site administrators.

WEEK 1: The researcher met with the principal to outline the practicum proposal and to appraise him of the steps that would need to be followed in identifying and screening possible LEP students prior to working with them. Permission was sought and granted to meet with guidance counselors, teachers, and students that would be involved in the project. An appointment was made to meet with the school registrar and all guidance

counselors the following week.

WEEK 2: An introductory meeting was held with the registrar and guidance staff to outline for them the practicum proposal and their possible roles in the project. The registrar was asked to provide a list of those students whose parents or guardians responded affirmatively to any of the three questions on the Home Language Survey (HLS). It was necessary that these documents be in place in each student's permanent record file.

The guidance staff was asked to distribute teacher surveys to all English teachers. A copy of the survey devised by the researcher will be found in the appendices (appendix B). Those teachers were asked to complete a questionnaire for any student they perceived to be experiencing difficulty because English was not their first language. The completed forms were returned to the project mentor, a member of the guidance staff at the target school.

During the second week of project implementation, an appointment was made with the Director of Student Services for the district. The researcher had agreed to being trained in the administration of the IPT II. It was the instrument chosen by the district to identify

students as being NES, LEP, or FES.

WEEK 3: The researcher met with the Director of Student Services and was given basic instruction in the use of the IPT II. As the researcher had also agreed to screen any potential LEP students district-wide, the opportunity presented itself during that week to become more familiar with the test. The researcher was asked to screen two elementary students prior to using the test with students at the secondary level.

The teacher survey forms were retrieved from the project mentor and reviewed with the guidance staff at the school site. The names of students submitted by teachers were then sent to the office of the registrar. Each of those student's files were checked to make certain the HLS was in place, as required by the state department. If there were no HLS in a file, one was sent home by the guidance department, to be completed and returned before any screening could take place.

Appointments were made for the following week to meet with each student's English teacher and to observe those students in their respective classes. An appointment was also made with the chairperson of the English department to discuss scheduling and use of school materials. Introductions were made to the staff

in the media center where the conference room was to be utilized for meetings. The researcher also met with the computer teacher and was able to make arrangements for her to be able to work with students on computers during regularly scheduled classes. The school did not have a computer lab available for individual teachers or students to use at the time of project implementation.

WEEK 4: The researcher met with English teachers to discuss individual student's attitudes toward learning and using the English language, the progress being made in acquiring English language skills, and course expectations each teacher had for those students. The researcher was able to observe students in their assigned English classes, and in some cases, Social Studies or Remedial Reading classes prior to actually meeting them and administering the IPT II.

WEEK 5: Subsequent to the assessment made the previous week, the researcher made arrangements for the designated students to be given hall passes during their regularly scheduled English classes to meet in the conference room at the library. Introductions were made among students. Students were then asked to complete a student survey to ascertain previous

knowledge of word processing and attitudes toward using the computer. Informal talks were conducted to aid the students in feeling more comfortable with the researcher and with each other.

WEEK 6: Students and researchers met in the library for general discussion prior to moving to the computer lab. Students were actively involved in a short presentation which was made concerning basic operation procedures for the Apple IIE computers that were to be used for the project. For the students' first exposure to the word processor, the Vocabulary Builders Software Package was used to help students orient themselves to the keyboard.

WEEK 7: Following a brief review of how to turn on and boot up the program, students were asked to find individual files with their names on them and bring them up on the monitor. Students then read and responded to the message written by the researcher using the Appleworks word processing program. This exercise served to review necessary computer application skills and to make students feel more at ease in using the word processor for writing purposes. The researcher was present to assist students on an individual basis.

WEEK 8: Students continued working on the computer to draft and revise student-driven text, applying newly acquired word processing skills. The researcher was present to offer encouragement and/or assistance to individual students.

WEEK 9: Students were asked to write brief notes to friends in America or in their home country telling them what it was like living in this country. Prior to beginning the project, the students were asked to work collaboratively in compiling a checklist of correct grammar points, mechanics and syntax to be utilized as an aid in the editing process for future writing.

WEEK 10: The students were asked to read articles and compositions written for publication by LEP students in various other school settings. An open discussion about adjustments students have had to make attending an American high school and the problems they may have encountered trying to communicate in English followed. Students were then asked to consider writing their own compositions for publication in the high school newspaper.

WEEK 11: The editor of the school newspaper was asked to meet with the students to answer any questions they might have about publishing their work. An effort

was made to put them at ease about how their writing might appear to other students more fluent in English. It was important for them to understand that the purpose of the article was to have them communicate their feelings and thoughts to others, for classmates and teachers to gain a sense of the difficulties these students were facing in learning a new language while trying to find their place in the school. All three students agreed to compose a theme using the word processor. Students "brainstormed" on the computer and made hard copies to take home for additions, corrections and revisions during the week.

WEEK 12: Students worked to complete compositions prior to the publishing deadline. As they completed their written work on the computer the researcher interviewed each student orally concerning thoughts and perceptions about learning to use the computer. Students were also asked to give suggestions which might be helpful to other LEP students who might enroll at the school in the future.

CHAPTER IV

Results

Prior to the implementation of specific computer-assisted language learning strategies with LEP students, it was imperative that the guidelines, as established by the 1990 Florida ESOL statute (233.056, F.S.) and the META Consent Decree, be applied. Although there were no outcome objectives designed to incorporate that part of the project, it was necessary groundwork which had to be laid prior to attempting to implement and successfully meet objectives. The outcome objectives and the means which were employed to evaluate their success or failure are as follows:

OBJECTIVE I

Each student will be able to successfully exhibit basic computer competencies at the conclusion of the outlined twelve week project time subsequent to receiving basic instruction in the use of the Appleworks word processing program and each will be able to demonstrate to the researcher the correct start-up and operation procedures for the designated

software program.

As previously indicated, none of the target group of students had prior knowledge of the word processing capabilities of the computer. The researcher chose the Appleworks word processing program because of its availability in the school and for the ease with which it could be utilized. Students were shown basic handling procedures for the hardware and software prior to being asked to load a disk into the computer. They were initially led through the process of creating a file, typing thoughts onto the monitor screen, saving written work on the disk and producing a hard copy.

With the immediate feedback the students were able to receive from the researcher, it was possible for them to quickly grasp the mode of operation for the Apple IIE computers with which they were working. In addition, the researcher was able to repeat a specific procedure, such as how to delete unwanted text, on an individual, need-to-know basis.

An unplanned but positive outcome experienced by the students was the assistance other students working in the computer lab offered the LEP students as they worked to become familiar with the lab and its operating procedures.

The researcher was gratified to see that all of the target students were able to demonstrate with ease the required competencies for utilizing the word processor in student writing.

OBJECTIVE 2

Subsequent to the twelve week implementation of the project, two thirds of the targeted students will modify their perceptions that, learning to use the computer would be difficult, to the persuasion that basic computer competency is easily attainable, as indicated by their responses to a concluding oral interview conducted by the researcher.

As indicated in a pre-project survey of student perceptions about the ease of learning to use the computer for written expression, two of the three target students expressed the belief that it would be difficult to learn to use the computer. When asked to re-evaluate their responses to the initial survey at the conclusion of the project, the two students who had initially perceived learning to use the word processor to be difficult acknowledged that they were gratified to have mastered basic computer competencies so readily. All three students concurred that they would

be willing to help other students learn to use the computer for writing purposes and that they would seriously consider taking a computer applications course in the future.

One of the two students who had felt some trepidation about learning to use the computer gained enough confidence to demonstrate basic computer usage to his English teacher who had no knowledge of computers. The researcher was assured that all three target students had positive attitudes toward learning to use the computer when they actively took part in a demonstration of the vocal capabilities of the Macintosh computer recently installed in the media center at the school. Any apprehensions about learning to use technology seemed to have faded as they were caught up in the excitement of learning to use yet another tool of the technological age.

OBJECTIVE 3

Over a period of twelve weeks, all targeted students will manifest an improved disposition toward written expression in English as evidenced by their productions of creative writing pieces and their subsequent permission to allow completed compositions

to be published in the school newspaper.

During the course of interviews conducted with English teachers, the researcher became aware of the recurring complaint from the teachers of the target students that they were reticent to commit thoughts and ideas to paper. This was demonstrated in the students' negligence in turning in written assignments or submitting incomplete or sketchy written work. All three of the target students had acknowledged an interest in writing in their native language when responding to a question on the initial student survey concerning writing in their native languages.

Although the period of time was brief, the researcher was able to witness an increased production of written text on the part of all three students. In each case, written expression on the computer increased from simple one or two sentence responses to the researcher's personal notes, to completed paragraphs and compositions. The teachers of all three students indicated in post-project interviews that they had begun to see less reticence on the part of the target students to submitting written work. One student was able to complete a written assignment for his English

class on the word processor during the course of the project.

When the researcher initially introduced the idea of submitting written work for publication in the school newspaper, two of the students were hesitant to share what they felt to be inadequate manuscripts. Following their reading of other previously published LEP students' work and discussions led by the researcher and editor of the school paper, all three students assented to having their work published. The researcher noted the amplified interest each of the students had toward sharing something of what they felt or had experienced in coming to a new country. Their willingness to narrate their personal stories and the seriousness with which they pursued this task was confirmation for the researcher that they had indeed begun to feel more confident in expressing themselves in English and most importantly, were more inclined to experiment with the language through the medium of the word processor.

OBJECTIVE 4

Pursuant to participation in the twelve week

project, 100% of the students in the target group will demonstrate an increased awareness of basic English language spelling, punctuation and writing mechanics by compiling a student-contrived checklist to be used as a guide in editing written work.

During the course of project implementation, the students were involved in writing and collaboratively editing sentences and paragraphs. Although they were able to identify errors on one another's papers and could offer suggestions for inclusion on a checklist of language points, none was able to apply that knowledge or awareness to his own writing. As the project progressed, it became apparent to the researcher that it was more important for the students to gain confidence in their initial attempts at written expression in English. Because of the brevity of project implementation and lack of appropriate software for checking spelling and grammar, the original notion of teaching LEP students to utilize the computer as editor was not possible. Perhaps if the students had been able to learn to implement a spelling or grammar checking program, they would have increased their

awareness of the mechanics of the English language. It was not evident to the researcher that any of the students had progressed significantly in his awareness of English language usage, mechanics, or spelling to signify a positive outcome of the stated objective.

CHAPTER V

Recommendations

In an effort to improve the learning environment for identified LEP students at the targeted high school, an attempt was made to somewhat lessen anxieties the students might have had toward language acquisition as well as toward the educational setting in which they had been placed. It was felt that, if the identified LEP students were offered a means of expressing themselves in an accepting and supportive learning environment, they would more readily make attempts a written expression for their own enjoyment as well as to complete course assignments.

Learning to use the computer to better express some of their thoughts and concerns enabled them to acquire valuable word processing skills, while also opening the lines of communication for them. By learning to use the Appleworks word processing program, these students which could be transferred to daily requirements for written work. With the introduction of a new media center at the target school, which included

Apple IIE computers as well as Macintosh Classics, the students would have the advantage of already having mastered basic competencies in using the technology to assist them in writing and editing their written work. By utilizing spelling and grammar checking applications the targeted students could safely rely on the computer to make suggestions for revision of text in a way that benefited the students. It was hoped that students would begin to take advantage of the available technology to process their written assignments prior to turning them in for grading by teachers.

A post-project meeting was scheduled with individual English teachers to share the project outcomes. Suggestions were made as to how teachers might incorporate use of the word processor into their regular classes. The new-found expertise of the LEP students in computer applications might be drawn on as a resource for teaching other students and teachers basic word processing skills. With the proposed acquisition of new, more user-friendly computers at the targeted school, students and teachers alike, will have greater access to microcomputers.

A meeting was held with the chairperson of the English department in an effort to encourage the

establishment of a school level LEP committee, as outlined in the district TESOL plan. Plans for incorporating ESOL strategies into the secondary curriculum, perhaps as part of the dropout prevention program, were discussed. The department chair indicated that a component addressing the need to identify and assist learners of English would be added to the school's site plan for the upcoming school year. A further suggestion was made to encourage identified LEP students to take the computer applications course presently offered at the target school. The course instructor might benefit from more definitive in-service training to learn appropriate strategies for helping LEP students assimilate and succeed at the secondary level.

A copy of the completed practicum was submitted to the project mentor, who has since been designated head of the Guidance Department for the upcoming school year. With the insight she has gained as a supporter of the project, it is hoped she will continue to strive to establish set procedures for identifying, aiding, and monitoring the progress of LEP students attending the target high school. If they are to become successful learners while striving to assimilate into an American

high school, they must feel there is a program in place to support them during the difficult transitional period. Having access to the latest developments in computer technology won't solve all of their problems, but will provide them with an innovative base of instruction and assistance.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Home Language Survey

HOME LANGUAGE SURVEY

a language other than English used in the home? Yes_____No_____ If yes, please list._____
id the student have a first language other than Ei glish? Yes_____No_____ If yes, please list._____
Does the student most frequently speak a language other than English? If yes, please list._____
NOTE: If the answer to at least one of these is "yes", your child will be assessed to see if he / she has limited English proficiency.

MIGRANTS ONLY

1. Have you moved into St. Johns County within the past six years? Yes_____No_____
2. Are you presently working in or looking for work in any of the jobs listed below within St. Johns County? If yes, please check the type of work below:

_____Fruit Picker	_____Dairy Worker	_____Packing or processing of crops
_____Grove Worker	_____Food Processor	_____Other agricultural work
_____Farm Worker	_____Chicken Farm Worker	_____Cultivation or harvesting of trees
_____Vegetable Picker	_____Fishing Activities	

3. Have you worked in any of the jobs above in another state or county in Florida within the last six (6) years? Yes____No_____
4. When you moved to work or look for work, did your children ever travel with you? Yes____No____
5. Please list the name of each of your children and their ages. If the child is of school age, please write the name of the school and his/her grade level.

Child's Name	Age	School	Grade

I certify that the information that is included in this form is correct to the best of my knowledge and that where questions concerning giving or not giving permission were completed by me.

_____Date_____
(Signature)
Check One: Parent_____ Legal Guardian_____

Dear Parent / Guardian:
We are very pleased that your child will be attending Hunt Elementary School. It is our goal to provide your child the best possible education. This goal can best be obtained when the home and school work closely together. Keeping this in mind, we welcome your involvement in your child's school program.

Sincerely,

Robert Taylor, Principal

APPENDIX B

Language Skills Checklist

LANGUAGE SKILLS CHECKLIST

Please respond to the statements below by circling yes or no. Any of these skills which you many not have observed should be left blank. The space at the bottom is for comments or concerns which you may have concerning the student.

TEACHER

COURSE

STUDENT

The student:

1.	exchanges common greetings.	yes	no
2.	follows general directions in class.	yes	no
3.	answers basic questions appropriately.	yes	no
4.	asks appropriate questions.	yes	no
5.	can read class text/materials.	yes	no
6.	understands class discussions.	yes	no
7.	participates in academic discussions.	yes	no
8.	writes meaningful short paragraphs.	yes	no
9.	is performing adequately in class.	yes	no
10.	is cooperative in class.	yes	no
11.	completes outside assignments.	yes	no
12.	is able to meet course requirements.	yes	no

COMMENTS

APPENDIX C

Computer Survey-Student

COMPUTER SURVEY-STUDENT

1. Have you taken a computer applications course in high school? _____

2. Do you have a computer at home? _____
   If yes, what kind is it? _____

3. Would you like to know how to use the computer? ___

4. Do you think learning to use the word processor would help you in your class assignments? _____

5. How do you think you might use the computer in completing class or homework assignments? _____
   _____

6. Do you think you can improve your English by using the computer? _____
   If yes, how will the computer help you? _____
   _____

7. Do you think that learning to use the computer will be hard? _____

8. Do you like to write in your native language? _____
   What do you like to write about? _____
   _____

9. Do you think other students might want to read some of the things you write about on the word processor? _____

10. Do you think other students might want to learn how to use the word processor? _____
    If yes, would you be willing to help them? _____